

In the element of language

By Jane Miller

GLORIA G. FROMM:

Dorothy Richardson

A Biography

470pp. Urbane: University of Illinois Press (American University Publishers Group). £10.50.

Gloria Fromm's biography of Dorothy Richardson is friendly towards its subject and scrupulously researched, and although with its reliance on a lifetime of copious letter-writing (125,000 words' worth during one year) it is apt to be over-enthusiastic about a headstrong or a newly damp patch on the wall, it also has interesting things to say. Dorothy Richardson's marriage to the much younger artist, Alan Odie, is plausibly understood here. It seems to have relied with success on some deliberate misunderstandings between them; ones which allowed Dorothy to believe her husband more of a childlike incompetent than he was, so that she could depend on his dependence. Occasionally she is visualized in the way she could visualize her heroine, Miriam Henderson, rising, in her fifties, "from her deck chair in the garden to twist about in a dance she had invented herself". There is little here, however, though the same less in John Rosenberg's biography, which is likely to penetrate the exasperation or indifference which have prevented more than a handful of readers from enjoying her marvellous novel *Testaments*. Pinter complained of her "egotistic dullness". Virginia Woolf of "the damned egotistical self" which she felt ruined Richardson's work as it did Joyce's. Recently she has been the subject of feminist critiques, which are significantly less irritable. The fulsomeness of John Cowper Powys's 1931 essay on her novel embarrassed Dorothy Richardson, and it is embarrassing, but his is the only attempt I know of to account with enthusiasm for the appeal *Pilgrimage* has always had for a few readers.

Because Miriam Henderson's fictional life between the ages of seventeen and forty contains some events from Dorothy Richardson's own life there is a temptation for the biographer to match episodes in the novel with their equivalents, to expound on them, turn up discrepancies or accuse the novelist as Gloria Fromm does at one point, of "a disgraceful trace of mimicry" in "her careful handling of the material". Worse, she shares with other writers about Dorothy Richardson a tendency to discuss Miriam's assertions, about men, women and novels, for example, without considering the way Miriam uses assertiveness as one of a number of strategies for locating herself during a tortuous journey towards the stability which might enable her to write the kind of novel Dorothy Richardson wrote herself. Tactlessness, self-mockery, a registering of ebb and fluctuation, even denial of her own intuitions, are at least as characteristic of Miriam as her use of extreme points of view, often contrasting each other, to suggest the movement of her mental life and the interplay of reflection with mood and sensation.

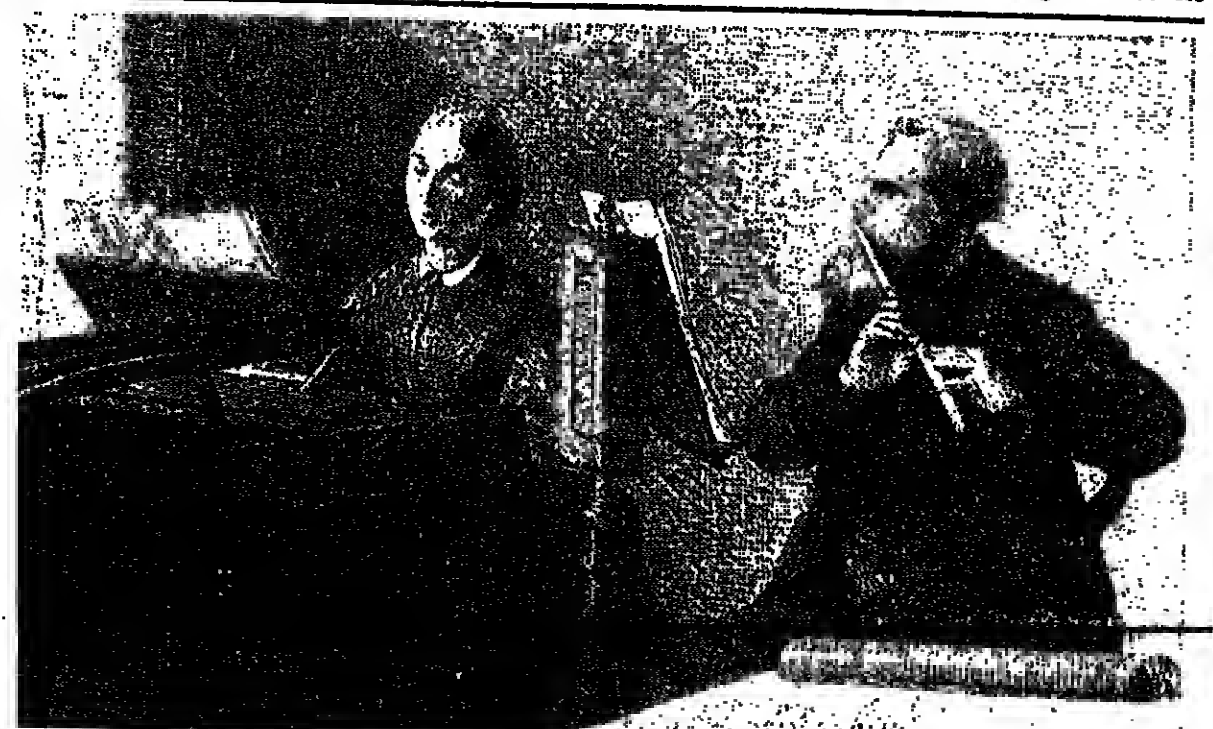
Gloria Fromm likes Dorothy Richardson when she is at her most sardonic. Miriam can be sardonic too, as when she congratulates herself on avoiding marriage to a "prospective husband".

the front gates of consciousness to guard the case of men waiting to be set going on their triples". This is surely very witty, with its suggestion of women as greyhound handlers: indeed, flippancy is one way Miriam expresses confusion about her dealings with men. Miriam can seem "mannish" to herself, or "burly", as Dorothy Richardson once described herself, and her dilemma consists in reconciling this side of her with her conviction that she, like other women, also possesses strengths and weaknesses which are especially and importantly feminine. The process of clearing such a familiar territory, from which the "hilariously expostulating narrative voice" of men would be expelled and pursued, is an exact expression of her need to find a voice of her own; one which could contain both extremes and neither.

Voices are important to Miriam beyond her discussion of them. Language is the element in which she moves; playfully unmaking, optimistically succumbing to its

sounds and shapes, which carry, even as they distort, feeling and thought and line. It is continuous across French and English, for instance, while diverging in ways which determine the lives and perceptions of speakers in the two languages. Language is also dangerous and limiting, while seeming seductively rich and autonomous. So that when Miriam considers her ambition to record the experiences which have mattered to her, she is also engaged in a search for a language that is new and multi-dimensional, yet based on what has to be shared experience if language can stand in for it. Miriam is often happy as well as angry and argumentative. The physical world makes her happy: the light forcing its way into a room through small, dirty window panes, the sound of a single little mouse scurrying from its hole, the sound of a pen nib on a sheet of paper. Such things make her exultant, just as a sudden insight into people or new ideas can, or the recognition that she is in love, whether with a man or a woman. It is in Miriam's nature that such moments should be interrupted and accompanied by self-consciousness, or edgy self-criticism, or an undermining scepticism. Language is not a neutral medium, but a tool which is used to create a world which is not the world as it is, but the world as it can be.

No accounts of Dorothy Richardson's love affair with H. G. Wells give a sense of what happens between Miriam Henderson and Hypo Wilson in the novel. The Mackenzies, in their biography of Wells, insist on Dorothy Richardson "hotly pursuing" a fugitive Wells. Gloria Fromm sees their relationship as a good deal less one-sided than that. But the affair is not just recalled in the novel, it is made central to Miriam's exploration of her need and sympathy for men. One reason she finds it difficult to accept Wilson is because of the encouragement he gives her. He



"Un morceau de Schuonau", portrait of Mr and Mrs Edwin Edwards 1864; one of only two oil paintings executed by Henri Fantin-Latour. It is reproduced in Fantin-Latour by Michelle Verrier (96pp. Academy Editions. £6.95; paperback, £3.95).

A strong taste of pink

By Nesta Roberts

MADELEINE MABSON:

I Never Kissed Paris Goodbye

204pp. Hamish Hamilton. £8.95.

Most of us, in childhood, knew the sensation of pink taste. It was vivid, powerfully scented, rapturously meretricious, more than a merely physical experience because of its association with such forbidden fruits as the more garish varieties of coconut ice and "abop cake", and, above all, the fillings of those small, rather pallidly coated chocolates known as rose creams. Madeleine Mabson's recollections of her Paris years evoke that flavour which, like the rose, is beautiful as a marble statue, by Donatello; and with all

of French-Jewish-Vietnamese parents, descended on Paris in the early 1930s, accompanied by her beautiful, not unduly repressive mother, it is clear that from the first she possessed the most precious gift for a future chronicler, the ability to attract experience. Before her mother (who, in her time, had attracted Axel Munthe) had returned to South Africa, the young Madeleine, already fixed up with a job as secretary to a rich American widow, had suffered the "seismic shock of first love". It reached her across a café table in the sixth arrondissement; the author remembers still how the universe rocked on wheels when she recalled her first French kiss from a young man described as belonging to the petite noblesse.

He was shortly superseded by a member of one of the great families of the city, a beautiful as a marble statue, by Donatello; and with all

thirty-six quarters into it. Surprisingly, the born novelist, the young woman, who was neither an heiress nor a great heiress, and behaved in a way that might be considered both civilized and generous when she was obsessively involved with a young man who had followed her from South Africa, was an "apricot-tinted savage". The worst complaint that she could make of her husband was that she found his army of relatives intolerable, and that she suspected him—unjustly, she was later to discover, for he needed them both of preferring the company of his twenty-year-old mistress to her own. Estranged, the baron turned up to save her from suicide when the apricot savage left her for an English rose; after the outbreak of war he was there again, anxious to

get her out of Paris as he was threatened. In the meantime, since, after an interlude as a lavishly gifted and a millionaire industrialist, he had set up house in the rue Jacob, a Swiss artist, sold his house in a mouldy Duncan (brother-in-law) in an effort to support his family, and had been a journalist. The setting for the family drama is the Paris of the 1930s—Cocotou, Foutou, Loulou, and Morin, Marie-Louise and Natalie Clifford Barney and with a cast of whom the author is sufficiently honest to claim no more than acquaintance.

The end of the book, which brought us to 1940, leaves the author taking the train from Paris to Marseille, en route for London, looking for a biscuit. Pink taste was

FICTION

Off after Arthur

By Tom Shippey

PERCEVAL and the Presence of God

Alfred A. Knopf. £4.95.

The thought of a modern Perceval is not immediately appealing. It is dangerous myth to rehearse, just because it touches on so many of our preconceptions, affords such easy approaches to familiar conclusions. In the twelfth century the boy who does not know his name, who has been reared in the forests to keep him from danger and evil, who nevertheless falls in love with a knight, the first thing he does is to create a myth for himself. He is not out of this circle, not for us, not now, and Mr Hunter is content to leave Perceval questioning, perhaps under delusion and probably into fullness. Still, his interpretation is an arresting one. And interpretations are more compulsive than events. Romance has always dealt in marvels intellectualized.

There is just enough uneasiness in Mr Hunter's novel to remind one of these problems. Once or twice the characters come out with remarks like "I am immature" (Perceval) or "It makes you more aware" (Whiteflower), and you are reminded of the moral backwash of people in an Arthurian epoch believing in the ideologies the flickers imply. There are flickers of Perceval and his world, too, of the young gentleman and his "woman" myth, which reflect again the characters' novel's incessant urging towards disbelief and debunking, the contemporary use of earlier literature as a punching bag. But Mr Hunter fights down these impulses and the novel does not have the feel of a man trying to do *The King Must Die* yet again, but considers the genesis of meaning, its unreliability, the involvement of the observer with observed: all themes of modernity, but ones which do no violence to older tellings except by reminding us how things have changed.

In this novel Perceval never actually catches up with Arthur. So is Arthur just a fiction born from the mind of the writer? The idea that he finds that he cannot find the same way of him, so he cannot find Arthur. And what about God? He never appears on the scene either, but he even more than Arthur is the validator of Perceval's code of mercy and self-sacrifice. These are the virtues of the novel, and they are against all Perceval's labours training in survival. Where can such unnatural things have come from, if not from some One outside? At the stage you can see the point of the idea: you can feel a presence and not know whether you have a presence or a feeling. That doubt must be at the heart of any modern mythology.

So Perceval considers in turn the evidence for something outside his realistic world of mud and mud and mud, coincidence, sexuality, love, evil. At the centre of his felt

and his doubts is the meeting with the Fisher King, apparently miraculous, never finally confirmed. It is Mr Hunter's new notion to have two Grail scenes, one in the mystery and performed by the Fisher King, one entirely matter-of-fact and unmiraculous even by Perceval, at that moment embarrassed, preoccupied, only coincidentally lame. Nevertheless they do create a network of possible relationships between the two wounded spearmen who shed their blood for others.

Maybe the presence of God is manifested most clearly in the search for Him. Without a mythopoetic faculty in people there would be no myths, but then, if there were nothing behind the myths, why should there be this senseless search to create them? There is no out of this circle, not for us, not now, and Mr Hunter is content to leave Perceval questioning, perhaps under delusion and probably into fullness. Still, his interpretation is an arresting one. And interpretations are more compulsive than events. Romance has always dealt in marvels intellectualized.

Old Viennese obsessions

By Anita Brookner

KATHRIN PERUTZ:

Relgning Passions

367pp. Wendenfeld and Nicolson. £5.95.

You will need to be something of a masochist in the widely accepted understanding of the term, to plough through this vicariously exciting novel by Kathrin Perutz. You will need to be something of a masochist in the widely accepted understanding of the term, to plough through this vicariously exciting novel by Kathrin Perutz. You will need to be something of a masochist in the widely accepted understanding of the term, to plough through this vicariously exciting novel by Kathrin Perutz.

Appropriately enough, there is something lack-lustre about masochism. Kathrin Perutz does not rotate an entry in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* although his writings are as prolific and as obsessive as those of the clinical masochists. He was once hailed as the heir to Goethe. Ms Perutz rather likes him, or at least sees him as an essential part of Old Vienna, where he tells stories in coffee-houses, encounters the infant Freud in the Prater, and the St. Stephen's church with pleasure. And marriages and raises a family just like everybody else. I think her contention is that what with the Empress Elisabeth starving herself to keep her eighteen-inch waist, epidemics of cholera, and the financial

Heroes of marriage

By Harold Beaver

JOYCE CAROL OATES:

Crossing the Border

256pp. Gollancz. £4.95.

Joyce Carol Oates has produced another fine set of novels—witty, wily and variegated. The theme yet again is one of "marriages and infidelities"; the scene that of her home town (Windsor, Ontario) on the United States-Canada border. There the river snakes

a natural border. Across its choppy, rather ugly waters (lies) the United States, looking like any dismal manufacturing city at this point, smokes stacks of billow black smoke, ragged puff of white smoke. . . . At this political junction (between Windsor and Detroit, Lake Erie and Lake Huron) she plots a series of emotional junctures that also evoke "natural borders". At all such

crash of 1873, devastation could be accepted as a way of life in those picturesque times. Unfortunately she is an historian and her attempt to intersperse Socher-Masoch's life-story with a survey of the period as a whole is not successful. She is no geographer either: all rivers sparkle, buildings are yellow-coloured and the food is vague.

On Ms Perutz's showing, Socher-Masoch was a lovely character ("crazy Leo") who spilled his food, wrote for family magazines and liked imperious women with auburn hair. His wife Wanda was an impoverished glove-maker who impersonated a mysterious aristocrat, and their two fantasies were eventually joined. Wanda grew weary of her duties and Socher-Masoch delegated her functions to his translator and his secretary. He had at least three children whom he misplaced or ignored and was eventually suspected of having a screw loose when a friend discovered his diary containing a cat. Meanwhile, at Mayerling. . . .

If local colour cannot support or animate this strange personality, and it cannot—one may then ask whether the world is ready for a romantic middle-brow fantasy on the theme of his activities, which cannot always have ended as symbolically as Ms Perutz would have it. Proud was in no doubt that masochism involves a very grave injury to the personality, and outside the analytic situation he seems to have felt a marshall's distaste for it. It can further be asked whether any novelist without clinical expertise can do anything but parody or, in this case, deconstruct Socher-Masoch's predicaments. It should be remembered that as well as being psychiatrically ill, Socher-Masoch died clinically mad; in the case of the Marquis de Sade, his real neurotic argument, however perverted, underlying his dreams.

To avoid military service with the Kaiser, Germans or, perhaps, worse, to avoid the military, are like Socher-Masoch's activities, an obsessive card-playing and sexual frenzy: the objects of his desire successfully himself (a virtuoso pastiche of the objects of his desire) and his sister (his mother having already died bearing his child) and the companions of his stay.

Various distasteful effects are employed. Proper names are exploited for such comedy as can be derived from proper names: there is a curious undertow of geological terminology—one chapter is called "the infilling of the vug" which sounds like a Macedonian irrigation project, but is actually a term of art from the Cornish tin mines. Above all, reality is magnified with deliberate extravagance until it ceases to be realistic: pus does not disgust. And the novel is an honourable attempt to make the horrors of contemporary history a bearable subject of scrutiny without trivializing or exploiting them.

holders travellers, she insists, must confront the abrupt and unexpected challenge of alien "customs".

The stories are linked not only by theme and setting, though, but by the marital rift in an American couple (a young biologist and his wife) who have emigrated from Florida to exchange the research "frontier" of germ warfare for a more neutral border. Their cheap rented house overlooks America and the river. The worst of their commonplace marital dissection, adultery and disillusion, threatening in and out of alternate stories, blurs and packages the volume. The warp (and how well Joyce Carol Oates knows its potential for warping) is the theme of the book, one of the best stories here, escape from marital oppression entails eventual retreat into a nocturnal tragicomic existence with other academics and a backward faculty bachelors—leaving through aged copies of *The Times Literary Supplement* in the Humanities Building Common Room.

For her central object of concern is the domestic male within marriage. Can the male of the species survive marriage? Can his boyish, exuberant, insecure and romantic self harden sufficiently to bolster and prop the marriage or must it inevitably shatter and dissipate itself in endless impotent and shallow flirtations? Must the female always be so triumphantly and passionately unhappy? Must the men, in dreary self-preservation, always and by begging for forgiveness and support from a woman's strength? In middle age must they turn so scathingly bitter? Are they ever truly capable of loving anyone? When cuckolded (like the young biologist) they become silent, desperate pindlers. As lovers they are thin-skinned egotists, sensitive only to their own feelings. Ultimately, whether exposed in the encounters of life or transformed in dream, they are impotent.

Marriage would not change it. Marriage with David would be no

different from their life now, this heavy bondage of her love for him, her dependence upon him. She wanted to be free. She wanted to be as free as he was. . . . And he lay above her, clumsy and warm, his embrace soft as a woman's embrace but very heavy, his breath hot upon her, and she begged him to come to her, but there was nothing—there was no flesh of his to enter her, nothing. She cried out to him bitterly. He was nothing. He could say nothing. . . . It had been an illusion, a dream of her own, his vigorous manhood. She had had to thrust him away, finally—she had had to free herself of him.

As the bewigged and painted European divorcee (in a tongue-in-cheek parody of Ismael's fiction) informs her deum-clad American nephew: The season for mating takes no imagination, it's all direct, physical, it's impersonal, but after that life is all imagination, and your father doesn't have that capacity. Most men don't. That's why they are impotent—most men.

It is a terrible indictment. The heroic task, then, is to preserve the frail compact of marriage. The borders of that compact are defied by several outsiders—an important homosexual, a friendly simpliciton, a potential lover—who intrude on the married nest. The need is to obviate the danger, to deflect it, to decamp if necessary, to isolate the marriage itself. "All marriages," the lover's voice concludes (amid a buzz of caustic ironies), are a work of art. In ways that can be described. But should the marriage fail, it is the males, exiled from domesticity, who are lost in a limbo: of common rooms, if lucky; if not so lucky, in the stale air of post offices with ex-wives, ex-graduates, ex-executives, ex-clerks (black and white), sorting out "acres of mail, mountains of mail, from one shadow to another", in that final haven of peace and calm, munal silence.

July Books

Non-Fiction

THE SKY IS FALLING

Arthur Weingarten

A gripping documentary that re-creates, through the eyes of thirty survivors, the irony and intensity of the day a twin-engine B-25 Army bomber crashed into the Empire State Building. 272 pp/illus £5.95

PADRE IN COLDITZ

The Diary of the Rev. J. Ellison Platt

Edited by Margaret Duggan

To his diary, Jack Ellison Platt, an Army Methodist Chaplain and one of the longest inhabitants of Colditz, records the day-to-day life of Colditz and shows the strength of the human spirit in highly unusual and at times almost unendurable conditions. 192 pp £5.50

Fiction

HAUNTED HOUSE

Norah Lofts

A superb sequel to GAD'S HALL, the earlier story of the haunted house of which George Thaw of The Daily Mirror wrote: "A marvellously polished chiller by a great storyteller." 224 pp £4.25

THE WIDOW

Harriet Key

Translated from the French by Martin Sokolinsky From the author of the international bestseller, THE GREEN, this sensational new novel traces the tangled life of the most sought-after woman of the century as she fights for a fortune and her future in the world of jet-age cat society. 304 pp £4.95

THE MILLS BOMB

Clive Egleton

A stunning, intricate novel set in the menacing world of international espionage, by the author of THE OCTOBER PLOT, SEVEN DAYS TO A KILLING and STATE VISIT. 224 pp £4.25

THUNDER AT DAWN

Alan Evans

It is 1917. Two superbly equipped German warships threaten to annihilate British shipping on the Pacific seaboard — only an outdated cruiser, HMS Thunder, and a young captain who is prepared to break all the rules, stand in their way. . . . 256 pp £4.50

Hodder & Stoughton

Who needs facts?

A ready-made moral posture is so much more satisfying. In assessing displays of violence and sex both the pro-censorship and anti-censorship lobbies distrust research. Eysenck and Nias show that in fact it can answer important questions. For instance, the most harmful portrayals of violence are those that are conventionally approved. Happy sex, however frank, is harmless — it can even reduce the likelihood of violent behaviour — but certain kinds of sexual exhibition do real harm to some viewers (different personalities react differently). The facts are complex but clear — and a lot more interesting than anybody's moral preconceptions. (maurice temple smith, 24 August, £5.95)

H.J. Eysenck & D.K.B. Nias: SEX, VIOLENCE AND THE MEDIA

de Sade

Ronald Hayman
 'A very good book... the most comprehensive critical study of de Sade in English, the most impressively researched biography' Angela Carter, *Guardian*, £6.95

The 100 years war

Desmond Seward
 'Highly readable survey of 100 years of Anglo-French history' E. R. Chamberlain, *Daily Telegraph*, Illustrated, £6.95

Reluctant pioneer

Georgina Battiscombe

The life of Elizabeth Wordsworth
 'Sympathetic, light and omnisciently detached' Mary Warnock, *Sunday Telegraph*, 'Quite delightful... has the liveliness and ardour which Elizabeth herself inspired' David Williams, *The Times*, Illustrated, £6.95

The performers

Norman Shrapnel
 Politics as theatre
 'We are not likely to see any compendium of Parliament in these 20 years that will challenge in readability, accuracy and shrewdness, the judgements of Mr Shrapnel makes on his star cast' Harold Lever, *Guardian*, £4.95

The rise of the plutocrats

Janice Camplin
 Wealth and power in Edwardian England. Illustrated, £6.95 (17 July)

Nocturne: a life of Chopin

Ruth Jordan
 The first detailed study in English for nearly 40 years. Illustrated, £6.95 (17 July)

Selected stories of...

One of the best short story writers alive... (they) are a treat' Melvyn Bragg, *Punch*, £4.95

Listening to Billie

Alice Adams
 'The portrayal of Billie is brilliant. The balance between introspection and action is perfect... A cool and elegant book' Peter Tinniswood, *The Times*, £4.25

Constable

The Irish thing

It is no secret that much of the best poetry published in Britain over the past decade or so has come from Northern Ireland. Seamus Heaney, John Montague, James Simmons, Michael Longley, Derek Mahon, these and other poets have already made substantial contributions to what, in future critical surveys of the post-war period, may become known as the poetry of the Ulster War. Already, too, fragments of this chapter of literary history have achieved a kind of general currency: how, under the chairmanship of an Englishman, Philip Hobsbawm, a poetry discussion group developed at Queen's University, Belfast, in the early 1960s; how, since a new spirit in Northern Irish poetry began to emerge in first collections, in pamphlets, and in the magazine, *The Honest Ulsterman*; how by the time the political troubles had begun in the late 1960s, Belfast poets had already acquired the craftsmanship necessary to respond in verse to a war which was neither hysterical nor sentimental; how, in one week in May 1969, Seamus Heaney wrote twenty-two poems. The story is well known. No one could claim that contemporary Ulster poets have been denied their fair share of attention.

Not all of the attention, however, has been of a useful or illuminating kind. Two often—in the glossy articles, in the rushing interviews, in the encounters with journalists (see Heaney quote in 'In search of views on the Irish thing')—discussions of the poets' relationship to the troubles has failed to get beyond the level of platitude. This is hardly surprising: the poets have grown up in communities, and have lived through a period, where it is safer not to be forthcoming. They have found it prudent to succumb to what Heaney calls

The famous Northern reticence, the tight-gate of place

And times... Whom to be sowed you only must have faced
 And whatever you say, you say nothing.
 Many words have been spoken on the subject of Northern Ireland and its poetry, but often very little has been given away.

There's something very deliberate, then, in the choice of title for a television programme on contemporary Ulster writers to be shown on July 23 at 8.10 pm on BBC 2. The programme is called 'A Quiet World', and it aims to replace the sound and fury of previous investigations into the subject with quiet and insightful statements. It does this, very simply, by allowing the writers to speak—in private, at length, and without interruption—about their upbringing, their religious and political convictions, and their art. The interviewers, Derek Bailey, James Simmons, and John Longley, pose an excellent job, but never seem, and hardly ever, overdo it.

Five poets are featured: as well as the middle generation of Heaney, Longley and Simmons, we also see two of the younger talents, Frank Ormby and Paul Muldoon. In addition, there are interviews with Stewart Parker, author of two recent successful plays, *Spokenword* and *Catchword*, and with John Muldoon, a prose writer who specialises in the short story. The programme is a choice of writers (four poets and three novelists), but to the alteration of the close-ups and intrusions of interviews with middle distance shots of the poets at public readings.

Sexual intercourse actually began in nineteenth-century Ireland, to judge by Philip Larkin's 'Femmes Dames', written that year and now reprinted as by the same Broadview No. 27. The twenty-one-year-old Larkin's ironic glance at 'Bygone days' is a quietly subversive vision of decadence. Rachel and Rosemary replace Delphine and Hippolyte, and outside the ruby curtained room The milk's been on the step, The Gurnard in the letter-box, since dawn.

The author notes that his poem is evidence that 'I once read at least

The readings give us a chance to hear a couple of so extracts from each of the poets, and include one of the most powerful and emotive performances of recent years—James Simmons singing his ballad 'Claudy'. The interviews confront the issue of the poet's social responsibility, and a range of different attitudes (from commitment through liberal guilt to near aestheticism) comes over in the hour-and-a-bit for which the programme lasts.

Five years ago a programme of this kind would not have worked so well: the 'gag of place and times' would still have been too tight. But it is clear that the poets now feel freer of the pressures of 'sixty-nine' (the dreadful year is mentioned time and again), feel less anxious to sound 'relevant', can put past events in perspective. After the violence, it is now a time, Heaney says, of exhaustion and purgation, even of tentative hope. In this climate the poets are sufficiently relaxed for formerly unspeakable things to be spoken of; far Heaney to admit that, gratuitously though it may seem, he is, too, lonely to have lived through, and to have had the chance to write about, the troubles. It's that kind of honesty which makes this programme essential viewing. It's not colourful, but it seems likely to provide more insight into the poetic act than Ken Russell's biography of Coleridge (all regions ITV) which follows it.

Borrowed plumage

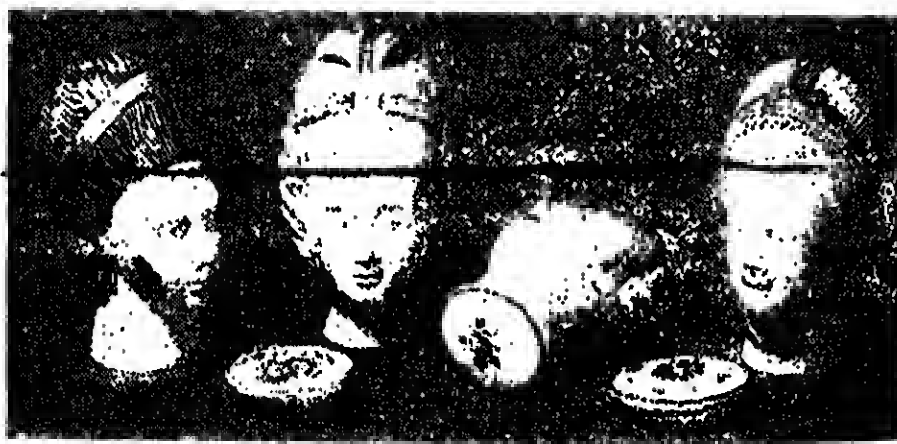
Those who find themselves in Edinburgh before September should seize the opportunity to see 'Van Dyck in Check Trousers', a lively portrayal of fancy dress in art and life from 1700 to 1900 at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. Two years ago this same gallery mounted an outstanding exhibition on childhood in eighteenth-century Scotland: 'Van Dyck' is a worthy successor. Sano Stevenson of the SNP and Helm Bennett of the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland are responsible for this year's show.

It could be claimed that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries represent the ultimate in gentility, our horzore penchant for disguise. 'Come as you wish you were in the beguiling frivolity of the reason why fancy dress became so popular in those centuries is that it provided an escape from the restrictions imposed on society of the time by the formalized discomfort of contemporary clothes. The point, though, is not wholly convincing. Sixteenth-century clothes were equally uncomfortable, but no Elizabethan, as a result, felt inclined to impersonate Malcolm Canmore or to sport a toga. One room at this exhibition is devoted to neo-classical dress, and an argument can be advanced that one of its principal charms was its loose, informal comfort. It also appeared to the nineteenth-century concern for health which led firms like Sanatogen to advertise their nudes

by relating pagan health to a neo-classical look in clothes.

These were certainly comfortable for disguise; another sense of the word 'plumage' is suggested by the title of the exhibition. If it were a parody of the life of a nobleman, it would be a parody of a nobleman. The exhibition is a parody of a nobleman. The exhibition is a parody of a nobleman.

The astonishing photograph of Arthur, Duke of Connaught, dressed as the Beast in a fairy tale, is wholly acceptable to a Restoration beauty and a lesser lady as Mary Queen of Scots. Maria Antonova's idyllic dairy inspired an eighteenth-century taste for the pastiche in its turn influenced dress. The influence was that of the writer Scott. *Quentin* was published in 1819 and had its effect on the coronation of George IV. Waverley novels were sold as 'Madame Britain' 'the Andromeda' and this view is reflected not only in the given to some fancy dress in the nineteenth century in the characters portrayed in the choicest of tableaux such as Wilkie Wynfield, Edinburgh, indeed an appropriate study of this exhibition.



Snuff-boxes in the form of ladies' heads, with everted and half inches high and wide made between 1780 and 1790. From Donald Topp's *Edgip. Paper* (EIS), a completely rewritten version of his pioneering study, *Edgip. Cream* coloured Eadweardian which was published in 1957.

Fifty years on...

In the TLS of July 12, 1928, A. C. Brock reviewed Le Surrealisme of Andre Breton. It seems probable that the style of painting to which the name 'cubism' was recently given by Matisse has turned out something of a mistake. It is hard to get the complexity necessary for a highly organized work of art when every detail and every form has to be invented. But, at any rate in the hands of its two most skilful exponents, Picasso and Braque, it is a style which shows no abrupt transition from any previous style which painters in the past had used. It is a style which is the best 'tradition' that has ever been known. It is a style which is the best 'tradition' that has ever been known.

Two other broadsheets published simultaneously, No. 25 and No. 26, Michael Vico and three poems by Edward Larrissy. The *Symposium* is available on subscription from John Rullen at 1, Nelson Place, Oxford.

of art it may be observed that any style, even though it may have been invented by the most uncompromising artist, can by the slightest modifications and with the greatest ease be used for ends not compatible with any serious tradition. One might have expected that the artist, rather than the collector, would be the one to introduce the painter's material to forms with as few associations as possible, might have expected that the artist, rather than the collector, would be the one to introduce the painter's material to forms with as few associations as possible.

It is, of course, impossible that any form, however intentionally abstract, should not carry about with it a considerable weight of associations; and it must be admitted that Picasso allowed himself some latitude in his invention of abstract forms. Mr. Fry has mentioned the resemblance between Mr. Kuffler's distinguished illustrations to Burton's 'Anatomy of Melancholy' and the woodcut of 'Hypnotomachia' of Poliphilus. So it is, precisely, such a resemblance to allegorical, or as the author of Poliphilus himself rather logically, called them, allegorical

pictures which is to be seen in the descendants of Picasso, MM. Ernst, Man Ray, Andre Masson, Joan Miró, Yves Tanguy and others whose works M. André Breton has so cupulously illustrated.

We must admit that the meaning of the Surrealist movement is not fully understood by the majority of its adherents. The Surrealist movement is not fully understood by the majority of its adherents. The Surrealist movement is not fully understood by the majority of its adherents.

The public reaction, as Sir Roger Fry has recently described in his con- siderable essay, was intense and hostile. Queen Victoria, who was not a Surrealist, was not a Surrealist. Queen Victoria, who was not a Surrealist, was not a Surrealist.

DONALD J. WEST and ALEXANDER WALK (Editors): Daniel McNaughton, His Trial and the Aftermath, 192pp. Ashford, Kent: Healey Brothers, £8.50 (paperback, £5).

In his moving foreword to a recent book on psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union (Russia's 'Psychiatric Hospitals', by Sidney Bloch and Peter Reddaway, 1977), Vladimir Bakovsky saidly observed that when Pinel first removed the chains from the mentally ill and thereby freed them from punishment as criminals no one would have guessed that two centuries later prisoners would look with fear at Pinel's successors, preferring chains to their 'care'. While events in Russia represent an unparalleled and systematic abuse of psychiatric practice, it would be a mistake to assume that the growing use of psychiatric labels to alter and sanctify even avoid judicial proceedings is limited to what is happening in that part of the world. Only recently, in the United States, Judge Earl L. Benson of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, who celebrated ruling in the Durham case in 1954 established the principle in American law that an accused person is not criminally responsible if his unlawful act was the product of a mental disease or defect, has performed a remarkable feat and expressed his concern that the placers of legal and psychiatric labels in civil commitment may actually impede justice and restrict individual liberty.

In this country, a radical revision of the 1959 Mental Health Act is being pressed by an assortment of interested groups spear-headed by the influential National Association for Mental Health (NIMH). The Act, once hailed as a remarkable piece of progressive legislation, is increasingly being portrayed as a dangerous infringement on individual rights. It is a danger to individual rights, it is a danger to individual rights, it is a danger to individual rights.

It is for this reason that the volume, this collection of essays on Daniel McNaughton, published under the aegis of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, is so particularly timely. On January 20, 1843, McNaughton, acting under the influence of persecutory delusions and possibly under the influence of a doctor who was attacking the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, fired at and mortally wounded Peel's private secretary, Edward Drummond.

McNaughton's trial and the subsequent decision of the House of Lords, which acquitted him on the grounds of insanity, has become a landmark in the history of the law of insanity. It is a landmark in the history of the law of insanity. It is a landmark in the history of the law of insanity.

So when I sprawl and shake the earth by hand And unknown flowers Anthologize, sucking my mores soft Into their blooms; I shall never then complain Of short measure. That I haven't lived all the life there is No way of saying.

Guilty but insane

By Anthony Clare

For his attack on the Queen "similar attempt almost immediately followed", not a single political assassination followed the hanging of Bellingham ("unquestionably a lunatic") for the murder in 1810 of a member of Parliament.

Such pressure proved irresistible and shortly after the McNaughton verdict the House of Lords resolved to ask the judges to give opinions on the several points of law involved. These legal opinions, which came to be known as the McNaughton rules, subsequently influenced the law on insanity in the English-speaking world for more than a century, incorporating as they do the famous dictum that if an offender knew that what he was doing was wrong then he was legally sane and subject to punishment.

Nigel Walker's account of the Rules as applied down through the years has already appeared in print, being contained in the first volume of his superb book, *Crime and Insanity in England*. Now, the less, the editors of this collection have wisely included it, setting it against the arguments propounded by McNaughton's skilful defence counsel, Alexander Cockburn, which are laid out elegantly in this collection, and the Rules thus contrasted look every bit as defective as they have done to the psychiatrists, lawyers and a Royal Commission who have so insistently criticized their failure to recognize that abnormal impulses might derive from deranged emotions leaving redundant any question of the rightness or wrongness of an act. Not until the 1957 Homicide Act were the Rules denied and, as Donald West points out in his introduction, even to this day should a defendant to a lesser charge than murder be so mad as to avail of them successfully he may avoid a prison sentence but at the cost of automatic commitment to hospital for an indefinite period.

McNaughton's counsel, in a submission which echoed that made in an earlier equivalent case, the case of James Hadfield for treason (he shot at and missed George III, at Drury Lane Theatre in 1800), argued that a man might well be sane on many points and yet by virtue of mental disturbance be rendered wholly incompetent in some or more of the relations of subsisting things in their true light, and though possessed of moral perception and judgment in general, may become the victim of some impulse so irresistible as to annihilate all possibility of self dominion or resistance to this particular instance. It follows, insisted Cockburn, that if under such an impulse a man commits an unlawful offence he cannot be made

Not guilty by reason of insanity may result in a sentence of unknown length in an institution, designated in every other way as an orthodox prison. As it is, there is mounting evidence that the proportion of prisoners in the penal system suffering from serious psychiatric illness is steadily rising as the willingness of the hospital system to accept and treat mentally ill offenders continues to contract. In practice, therefore, the legal distinction between madness and sanity appears to amount to little more than a procedural quibble.

It is, of course, true that the earnest, sometimes acrimonious

subject to punishment "because he is not under the restraint of himself if there is the possibility of effective treatment available about mental illness has disguised. Yet, as the legal arguments in this collection indicate, it is perfectly reasonable to argue and argue heatedly about the issue even though the actual nature of the mental illness under discussion is obscure and the treatment available is primitive. At the time of McNaughton's trial, the amount of factual information concerning the aetiology of paranoid delusions really have been written on the back of a penny black while the paucity of available treatment is a fact documented in the Bethlem Hospital archive.

It is ironic that now that a little more is known of mental illness and much more effective treatments are available, a swing back to the view that the mental ill should take their chances in a court of law like anyone else should be detectable. Not that all, or indeed any of the dozen or so contributors to this collection share my view that such a swing of the pendulum is under way. Indeed, Donald West is of the opinion that the steam has gone out of this controversy and that now we are liable to become more excited about how best or where best to treat someone, how long to detain him, how to assess his dangerousness and who should be responsible for his release than about the exact nature or extent of an offender's illness at the time of the crime. Rollin puts it even more colourfully, observing that British psychiatrists today "can concern themselves with McNaughton's Madness rather than risk being stretched over a barrel in an attempt to interpret McNaughton's Rules".

West and Rollin may well be right, but I have my doubts. Some psychiatrists may be coming to the conclusion that the central point of the argument has shifted, but just as they are doing so other psychiatrists, together with patients and lawyers, may be just beginning to grasp what the issue is all about.

After all, the controversy over the Russian discussion focuses not on the contemporary questions of where best treated, by whom and for how long but on the question debated with such verve, skill and venom in McNaughton's trial, namely the question of madness itself. The issue raised by Valborg Gluzman, Bukovsky and Modrovsky is that raised by McNaughton, and Hadfield. It is the issue raised by the psychiatrist in Tom Stoppard's play *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, when he informs the dissonant, "Your opinions are your symptoms. Your disease is dissonant".

The sooner it is unlikely to come from those who deny the existence of madness altogether. Nor is it likely to be arrived at by an indignant and over-inclusive definition of mental illness which can be twisted and deformed to suit any eventualty. Both positions boken ignorance. Indeed, it is worth noting that one of the reasons for Judge Bazelon's disillusion with psychiatrists is the poor quality of their testimony in the courts.

In this regard it is salutary to observe that the quality of the psychiatric discussion and the depth of specialized knowledge exhibited by the lawyers in the trials of both Hadfield and McNaughton came most favourably from that manifested in equivalent contemporary trials.

At a time when many press for a wholesale importation of legal advocates into official psychiatry, it is interesting to read of the efforts, largely of lawyers, made over a century ago to curtail the role of the criminal law in the area of insanity. With the Department of Health and Social Security anxiously considering submissions made concerning the Mental Health Act 1959 and the amount of the role of the psychiatric abuse and prison misuse, the time is ripe for a glance back into history. This collection of essays, some original, others discursive, one or two somewhat tangential, but all worth reading, makes such a retrospective assessment, and which is both fruitful and sobering.

So when I sprawl and shake the earth by hand And unknown flowers Anthologize, sucking my mores soft Into their blooms; I shall never then complain Of short measure. That I haven't lived all the life there is No way of saying.

Alastair Fowler

Words and Deeds

Problems in the Theory of Speech Acts

David Holdcroft
 In this book the author presents a theory of illocutionary acts. He explains how the study of speech acts initiated by J. L. Austin relates to and complements the truth-theoretic approach to the problems of linguistic meaning. It is shown that there are aspects of our use of language which cannot be explained by a semantics concerned exclusively with truth conditions. £7.50

The Poet and the Natural World in the Age of Góngora

M. J. Woods
 The seventeenth century saw the flowering in Spain of a new kind of poetry in which the description of nature played a prominent part. The most striking and influential of the innovators was Luis de Góngora (1591-1627), and in analysing the characteristic features of the new poetry the author looks at his originally from a fresh angle. £10 Oxford Modern Languages and Literature Monographs

The Sponsor

Notes on a Modern Potentate Erik Barnouw
 Sponsorship now conditions virtually all television schedules in America. Professor Barnouw explains how this has come about, examines the highly controversial issue of the sponsor's influence on all types of programming, and suggests ways in which it has shaped, and continues to shape, American culture, politics, and institutions. Illustrated £5.50

Future Perfect

American Science Fiction of the Nineteenth Century Edited by H. Bruce Franklin

This anthology of works by a number of major American writers—including Hawthorne, Poe, Melville, and Mark Twain—was first published in 1966. For this new edition Professor Franklin has added *The Man from the Moon* by Washington Irving, and *A Thousand Deaths* by Jack London, and has rewritten his general introduction and the introductions to a number of the individual stories. Second edition, paper covers £2.95 Galaxy Books

Marxism and the Metropolis

Edited by William K. Tabb and Larry Sawers

These papers represent the best of a growing radical literature on urban problems, and provide a new approach in urban studies to such topics as changes in the technology and organization of distribution activities; the decision of individuals and corporations as to location; conflict between interest groups; and how transport, housing, and urban renewal decisions are made. Paper covers £4.25

By Iona and Peter Opie

name of "Movable Feasts" in 1836, Mathering Sunday was found to be not merely movable but revolvable. Inquiries could produce a one instance of a mother being

ought a gift by her children. Yet today, fifty-two years later, *Millini Sunday* has become, to quote the *Times*, "the second most probable event in the greetings card manufacturers' year".

And Easter. Has Easter ever looked back as a popular festival—the south of England, that is—until you have just seen a national poster had the idea of opening up Easter eggs, and putting sweets or prizes in them? And if that is felt to be too laughable, what of the arrival of the Easter hare, apparently from Germany, which hides eggs in our gardens? Ti-

day we are unclear how our children came to be brought enjoying a custom we ourselves did not know when we were young. Recently we were given a children's rince game entitled *The Guinea Twelfth Night, or Holydays and Customs*, in which the players see how they can progress through the year at least distracted by seasonal fun.

hit Maudslayi he must "strip one
turn" to take part in the ritual
dawning or rolling dawnhill of
greenwells—a practice perhaps not
Thames-side in a thousand
could be aware of today—and on
September 6 the player lost a turn
like Peppys he dawdled at
ortholomew Fair.

they would not believe it, even if told, that they are the victims of a delusion that has often recurred; that before long pulls the rumour was that a reward awaited those

who could gather enough cigarette packets, and before cigarette packets it was bus tickets, and before bus tickets—more than a century ago—o fortune was said to await the person who collected a million used stamps.

We all know that the two great preservatives of superstition are greed and anxiety; that anyone who inclines the ability to spin straw into gold is assured of a following; and

When we were at school we were taught that one of the immediate causes of the Indian Mutiny was the introduction of the railways.

fat the cartridges fired in due were
heavily greased. The story got
round that the grease was pig's fat,

and the boys bellowed, that pig's
it was being used deliberately to
make them unclean, since they had
to bite off the cap of the cartridge
to pour the powder into the barrel.
Among British children, at the seat
of Empire, we doubtless smiled at
the naivety of the troops, and
echoed the words of our elders that
in India no story was too wild for
belief if connected with religion.

The Indian Mutiny broke out in 1857. But we children were never told—since no one until now has pointed it out—that the story that aroused the sepoys had already been current in Britain in a form only slightly more sophisticated. In

1846 Rowland Hill had introduced the penny post, with the condition that postage had to be prepaid. This was effected by the purchase of a special envelope, or of an adhesive stamp. Contrary to expectations the official envelope (the notorious "Mudrady"), with its pre-printed design showing Britannia sending news to all mankind, was laughable out of existence, which shows, incidentally, that the British in their days of power, were not always the tasteless chest-beaters their subsequent detractors like to portray. They opted for the beautifully designed but modest penny blocks, signed by philatelists then and now, or "Queen's heads" as people affectionately called them at the time.

There was, however, one snag. To make the stamp adhere to the envelope the glue had to be moistened, and the only suitable damp pad most people carry around with them is their tongue. At this time the normal adhesive was gum-arabic which was costly, and clearly was not the substance on the back of the Queen's heads. The story circulated that the glue was in fact poisonous, that the most vile ingredients were employed in its manufacture, that human material was not excluded, and that those so rash as to lick the Queen's head were in danger of contracting cholera—a story scarcely needs little believable by the Post Office's reluctance (or possibly inability) to divulge what in fact the substance was.

It may have been worth recording, if the absurdity of human history are within our province, that not long before the English man of letters was treating the glue like the plague, the Irish were rioting and committing arson in protest at its manufacture, since its constituent formed the chief part of their diet. The composition of the glue that Bacon & Petch were applying to the backs of the stamps was, of course, potato starch.

The scare about the glue on the backs of the postage stamps took place, as we have said, in the early 1840s. It will be remembered that until recently sponges were provided in post offices for moistening stamps; and as far as we are aware no further query has been raised about the glue's prescription. This does not mean however that the public has not been hugging its suspicions to its breast.

In January 1965 on underworld character known as Ginger Marks disappeared, apparently murdered, although his body has never been found. In October 1966 one of us had just finished writing a postcard in a Soho post office when the man next to us, filling in his football coupon, warned: "Never lick a stamp!"

"Why not?" was asked.
"Never lick a stamp," he repeated. "You may be licking Ginger Marks!"

"How d'you mean, licking Ginger Marks?"

"Ah", the man replied, "he went into a glue factory, didn't he? Everyone in south-east London knows that."

This is a shortened version of a paper to be read to the Centenary Conference of the Folklore Society on July 20.

Marks of the beast

By Roy Willis

J. R. PORTER and W. M. S. RUSSELL
Editors:
Animals in Folklore
292pp. £9.

E. C. CAVTE:
Ritual Animal Disguise
A Historical and Geographical Study of Animal Disguise in the British Isles
308pp. £7.
Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, Distributed by Boydell Press, Ipswich.

The first of these books originates in a seminar on witchcraft, magic and the animal world held at the University of Reading's department of sociology in 1976. Further contributions have been added to make up this handsome volume which celebrates the centenary of the founding of the Folklore Society in 1878.

In an elegant introduction, Katharine Briggs evokes the eighteenth and nineteenth-century burgeoning of folklore studies, including the coining of the term "folklore" by W. J. Thoms in the 1840s. The latter nineteenth-century folklorists—Max Müller, Andrew Lang, Sidney Hartland, et al. were the indigenous intellectual forebears of what was to become, in the twentieth century, a distinctively British school of serious anthropology. That brilliant efflorescence has faded, but folklore studies, as a humane and scholarly tradition, live vigorously on, as the learned and varied contributors to this volume attest.

But flourishing as folklore studies would appear to be, there is no evidence here that they possess any formal theoretical unity of the kind that Müller and Lang tried in their different ways to provide. The editors, no doubt wisely, have attempted no synoptic survey of the variegated contents, or proffered any general statement on the condition and prospects of folklore studies in Britain or elsewhere. The essays, which are all concerned with the broad topic of animal in folklore, are grouped in four virtually unrelated sections.

The first, "animal motifs", includes a brief piece on historical dragon-slaying by J. A. Boyle and a survey by J. D. A. Widdowson on animals as threatening figures in systems of traditional social control. Both authors characteristically disdain theoretical speculation: no mention of the voluminous psycho-analytical material on snake symbolism in the first essay, nor any attempt in the second to discover why particular animals (and not others) are selected to (for example) frighten naughty children.

Regional studies "begins with the very common, and puzzling, stories of a phantom 'black dog' in English folklore. Theo Brown explores this interesting subject from several angles without coming to any firm conclusion. The black dog, it would appear, is still with us: several have been reported run down, without apparent

injury to either party, by modern motorists.

In "Witchcraft and magic in the Old Testament, and their relation to animals", R. Porter tries to bring out successfully to relate biblical material to modern anthropological writings on witchcraft and sorcery. The writer appears to assume that tribal witchcraft and sorcery are remnant cross-cultural institutions, like kingship or ceremonial exchange, rather than symbolic representations of certain social relations with meanings which vary widely from one society to another. Joan Rorkwell leaves anthropology alone in her treatment of animals and witchcraft in Deuterian peasant culture, apart from a passing reference to Alan Macfarlane's Tudor study. Kathryn Smith considers the roles played by animals, as agents and media, in witchcraft and popular magic.

Her historical examples mainly come from rural Yorkshire. (Incidentally, counterparts of the "animal doctors" she mentions are still to be found in Ireland.) She observes that in modern industrial society knowledge of animal life is restricted to a small minority, and "it will be interesting to note how a technological society deals with these aspects of the animal world which may not fit in with an industrial philosophy".

"Shape-changing" has a section to itself, though it also occurs as a subsidiary theme in other parts of the book. "The snake woman in Japanese myth and legend" (Carmen Blacker) and "Shapeshifting in the Old Norse Sagas" (H. Ellis Davidson) introduce material which may well be unfamiliar to many readers. W. M. S. Russell and Clair Russell's "The Social Biology of Werewolves" is the longest contribution in the volume, and theoretically the most kind that Müller and Lang tried in their different ways to provide. The editors, no doubt wisely, have attempted no synoptic survey of the variegated contents, or proffered any general statement on the condition and prospects of folklore studies in Britain or elsewhere.

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Modern wolves, they suggest, have acquired a fear of humans and are more cautious in attacking than were their ancestors. An image of the wolf as non-conformist was, they say, widespread in medieval Europe. But wolf did more

than bite (and eat) man. He also infected him with a peculiarly dangerous and horrible disease: rabies. The terrifying symptoms of rabies no doubt contributed much to the werewolf idea. The authors go on to speculate on the remote origins of the belief, finding support for it in an unaccounted theory of totemism.

This part reads strangely to a modern anthropologist. Certainly beliefs about shape-changing, usually linked with dangerous local animals, are widespread in all cultures, as the authors contend. But behind such images and associations are probably much more complex than the Russell's theory would allow, with its appeal to a supposed "primitive" dogma which mistakenly believed that human groups were descended from different animal species. Concluding, the Russell's find "totemic" attitudes towards wolves reappearing in modern times in a variety of forms, including Baden-Powell's Wolf Cubs and the recent move to reintroduce wild wolves in certain European countries where they have long been extinct.

The book concludes on a more recondite note with two scholarly contributions: "On birds and animals in leon-palming tradition", by Veneda Newall, and "Animal charms", by Kenneth Oakley.

The study of folklore began as an offshoot of the Romantic Revival in nineteenth-century Britain, as Katharine Briggs tells us in her opening chapter. The strong, outmoded trend in present-day social science can be expected to generate a renewed interest in the subject in the country of its origin. The present volume is evidence of the continuing vigour of a venerable tradition of learning; but it also suggests that some of its practitioners could benefit from exposure to some less antiquated and "folkloric" anthropology.

E. C. Cawte's *Ritual Animal Disguise* is a companion volume to *Animals in Folklore*. It is a study of a particular custom: the use of animal disguise in ritual contexts. The author, who is a well-known expert on the subject, has collected a mass of material which may well be unfamiliar to many readers. W. M. S. Russell and Clair Russell's "The Social Biology of Werewolves" is the longest contribution in the volume, and theoretically the most kind that Müller and Lang tried in their different ways to provide. The editors, no doubt wisely, have attempted no synoptic survey of the variegated contents, or proffered any general statement on the condition and prospects of folklore studies in Britain or elsewhere.

In between blinks

By Renée Haynes

KATHARINE M. BRIGGS:
The Vanishing People
A study of traditional folk beliefs.
218pp. Batsford. £5.95.

Katharine Briggs, formerly President of the Folklore Society, has written a number of fascinating books, among them *The Anatomy of Puck* and *Pease Porridge*, a study of British folk-tales, a smaller *Dictionary of Folklore*, and two novels *Hobbit* and *Pease Porridge*. Her latest book, *The Vanishing People*, which should be more widely known. It details with vividness the adventures of two sixteenth-century Scottish apprentices, the father of the one married a mother of the other, and his bride proves to be a secret witch. The narrative is touching; strange and familiar as the story of the dancing coon.

The present book, more general, is no less absorbing. It deals with most of the figures of folklore in the British Isles, with some from Europe and Russia, and with a few from further afield, notably the Japanese marmoset. The *Vanishing People*, Dr. Briggs, are usually to be seen "between one eye-blink and the next" appear and disappear at will, and are said again and again to have left the country long ago. Tita Wile of Bath declared they had gone to King Arthur's time. Bishop Corbet bade "farewell" to a "fairy" and yet in the 1800s a northern shepherd boy and his sister asked a host of dwarfish

figures riding on opelched horses who they were, to he told "nnt of the race of Adam" and warned that "the People of Pease should never more be seen in Scotland". But later on, in England, in 1895, an old man said that as a boy he had watched fairies disappear down a hole near the Rotherlight Stone, and his wife said she and her playmates used to put a big stone over it so that they should not come out.

Even now these vanishing images seem to reappear in the familiar guises from time to time. Thus E. O. Somerville writes of having heard clear fairy music— "one wishes there were more about this here. The Grey Man of Ben MacDhul and other mountain presences are still reported, and as late as 1959 an Irish road had to be re-routed because its builders refused to infringe upon fairy territory. Surely too these shape-shifting people can be recognized offhish as the warring grannies, the cowboys' "ghost herd in the sky" as the Flying Saucer people, and as the Elfhound cabbage spirits, *deivas* whose leave has to be asked before the vegetables are cut (just as the "elder-mother" had once to be placated before "her" boughs were lopped).

Does such shape-shifting compensate for the trivializing of the original forms? Dr. Briggs observes that the fairies lived on the "foynson", the essence of objects, so that though meat and wine might look the same after they had eaten them, there was no goodness there. Sometimes the foynson seems to have been tucked out of the fairies themselves, to leave them as no more than frilly metaphors of a joyment ("Hay the fairies, Ho the fairies! Nothing but splendour and, familiarly, *gander*"), and more

An anthropologist would consider this phenomenon, a literate society possessed of a noble record, as most interesting. But here we have a problem which is also posed by activities of the Folklore Society: what deep need drives learned investigators to collect and sift on ponderous a mass of desire concerning a custom which on the face of it appears so meaningless? Cawte's book is a study of the material on the existence of fairies in many parts of England, Wales, and on the dates of ritual dramas connected with them. Not a few of the artifacts which times long after the ritual no longer observed. They come us here in several guises: as their custodians staring into the camera. These earnest men, who have run explain the meaning of a mysterious ritual, are a curious outsider. Even a numerous documentary record to original disfigure, going back to the fourteenth century, are fully lacking.

Cawte believes that the recent medieval and later forms were motivated by a need for food, drink, money and a penny. But he also discerns a deeper, primordial significance. "The single character who does not commonly associated with these animals is a man dressed in a woman's dress. . . . In the poems of Emilia Nelligan, written between 1896 and 1899, the date at which he was placed in a madhouse where he remained until his death, in 1941. Emilia Nelligan is considered one of the most suggestive modern writers on horse converses girls, or *de* them."

The ritual "animals" are the pawns, were once landed a tribute to fertility. Such a tribute should be found in folk belief. The author is a well-known expert on the subject, has collected a mass of material which may well be unfamiliar to many readers. W. M. S. Russell and Clair Russell's "The Social Biology of Werewolves" is the longest contribution in the volume, and theoretically the most kind that Müller and Lang tried in their different ways to provide. The editors, no doubt wisely, have attempted no synoptic survey of the variegated contents, or proffered any general statement on the condition and prospects of folklore studies in Britain or elsewhere.

This tripe-nostalgic approach is a far cry from the serious study of J. R. Porter's *Animals in Folklore*. The author is a well-known expert on the subject, has collected a mass of material which may well be unfamiliar to many readers. W. M. S. Russell and Clair Russell's "The Social Biology of Werewolves" is the longest contribution in the volume, and theoretically the most kind that Müller and Lang tried in their different ways to provide. The editors, no doubt wisely, have attempted no synoptic survey of the variegated contents, or proffered any general statement on the condition and prospects of folklore studies in Britain or elsewhere.

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Intimations of bucolic bliss

By Eugen Weber

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white tie and black frock coat, to Paul-Benjamin who enjoyed 20,000 francs of annual land rents and sold me of his farms to set up his medically trained son Georges in political journalism. By that time, provincial doctors had become fully accepted as local notables, and only the Goncourts still remembered the doctor who had attended their grandfather at Somerécourt wearing breeches, stockings and buckles, only to be relegated to the kitchen to share the servants' meal.

Nothing is more easily forgotten than the way people lived yesterday—the day before. This is particularly true of the things that poor folk are not mentioned. The things that are not said, not written, not expressed, are as important as those that are. Since Mure Blech and Lucien Febvre is recognized, historians developing the archaeology of everyday experience, eliciting the testimony of witnesses otherwise ignored.

A great representative of this school is Guy Thuillier, himself the son of a notable historian of the Nineteenth century. He has followed his father's footsteps though not in his profession (having chosen the administrative/political route, he has gone from ENA through many of Edgar Faure's cabinets into the Cour des Comptes). Born in Lorraine at Vaucouleurs, he brought up in Nevers. Thuillier is like his father André, a writer who presents broad swatches of history in a bright new light cast from a narrow source. He works in articles that go straight to the point, whose notes generally run longer than the text but are just as essential and fascinating. The things that interest Thuillier are, as the title of the present volume tells, the commonplaces we do not see or, rather, notice; and that historians, as a result, tend to ignore. The table of contents illustrates his quest, listing chapters (and articles) devoted to water, air, bodily hygiene, child-bed, medication, laundry, household tasks, gestures, writing, time, sounds (and silence), signals, awakening, materials, colours, smocks and aprons. All this in the context of an area less than 7,000 km² that proves sufficient to generate enough suggestions for a lifetime's work.

Here, as *un vrai*, are some of the things he talks about: cold, and colds, and the insomnias due to cold, and every aspect of sleeping; the habits of the noble and the peasant; the way one used to mend stockings and socks and no longer does; and the disappearance of once-familiar objects like the knob or oar that was used for damping down the longhouse and the costume, the little frock that children wore to school, dark (like fascist shirts) for economy's sake. The history of suffering, the religious value of suffering and the moral assessments connected with it, the relief in the importance of suffering (as for women giving birth or people dying), and the reluctance with

which the doctor did not always get paid. But his trade paid better with the years. Under the July Monarchy France counted between 20,000 and 25,000 medical men, about one per 1,750 inhabitants. They would be fewer than 14,400 in 1876 (one for 2,568). In the same period the value of the average doctor's fee had passed from 20,000 to 60,000 francs. Not all medical men were wealthy (witness Charles Bovary), but many country doctors founded veritable dynasties (pharmacists did, too), like the Clemenceaux, gnomes-formers in Vendée, or the Pottiers, the great grandfathers of the doctor of our time, Napoleon's Corps législatif, through Paul-Jules who visited his cows in

With Trotsky in Exile

FROM PRINKIPO TO COYOACAN

Jean van Heijenoort

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Information Scientist

We have a vacancy for an Information Scientist in our Central Information and Library Division in Shell Centre, London. This Division serves the commercial, technical and economic information needs of staff in Shell Centre who are concerned with international management of the energy and petrochemicals businesses.

You will work as a member of a team using the usual bibliographic tools for information retrieval, including those available by computer and will also contribute to an in-house computerised data base.

You should be a 2-3 year oil science or economics graduate and have a post-graduate qualification in Information Science or Librarianship. Some experience of techno-commercial information work is desirable. The ability to communicate with technical and management staff at all levels is essential.

The starting salary will be in the region of £4,300 per annum and a London Allowance of £585 per annum is payable. Assistance will be given with relocation expenses where appropriate. Please write giving concise details of age, qualifications and experience to: Shell U.K. Limited, Recruitment Division (T2) PNH/31, Shell Centre, London SE7 7NA.



Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht

UNIVERSITY OF UTRECHT, FACULTY OF ARTS
CHAIR OF CLASSICAL GREEK

As the present holder of the chair (Prof W. J. Verdenius) will retire this year, there will be a vacancy in the faculty of Arts from 1st September, 1978, for the post of (full)

Professor in Greek
Language and
Literature

The candidate to be appointed will be in charge of the teaching and research in the field of Classical Greek language and literature. This takes place within the Department of Classics and with the help of two staff members.

Administrative tasks, both in the Department and in the Faculty, have also to be fulfilled for this post.

The salary ranges from Dfl. 4,500.- to 10,141.- (gross) per month, depending on age and experience (scale nrs. 152-154).

Further details may be obtained from the chairman of the appointment committee, Prof. H. L. W. Nelson, Instituut voor Klassieke Taal en Oude Geschiedenis, Driit 29 Utrecht (Netherlands). Letter of application with curriculum vitae (with full particulars) and a list of publications to be sent within a month after publication of this announcement to the same address. Letters to recommend candidates for this post may also be sent to the chairman.

LIBRARY AND
INFORMATION ASSISTANT

As stated in our technical library staffed by librarians and information assistants serving around 400 engineering staff, the work involves the operation of loan services, control of periodical circulation, answering queries, preparing catalogues and the preparation of input to a computerised catalogue. Applicants should be able to cope with basic typing and publications are to be sent within a month after publication of this announcement to the same address. Letters to recommend candidates for this post may also be sent to the chairman.

Salary will be within the range of £2,800-£2,700 per annum (plus additional supplements) and conditions of service are excellent.

Please write or telephone for an Application Form to: Personnel Assistant, British Gas Corporation, Engineering Research Division, Harvey Combs, Killeleworth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 4JL. Newcastle 584224, Extension 348.

DERBYSHIRE
LIBRARY SERVICE

Applications are invited from Chartered Librarians, or qualified Librarians with experience of branch library organisation, for the post of

Librarian
Branch

The successful candidate will be responsible for the oversight of services (including a rural mobile library) to a catchment area largely in the Peak District National Park.

Salary will be within the special scale for librarians (£2,775 to £3,282 per annum, plus Stages 1 and 2 supplements), commencing at a point consistent with experience and qualifications. A salary award is pending.

Applicants should send further information to the County Librarian, County Office, Malpas 044 340, and forms should be returned by 28th July.

DERBYSHIRE
County Council

HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY
Research Division

Permanent post of Higher Library Executive in Home and Parliamentary Affairs Section, covering Parliament, the legal system, Home Office and social affairs. Varied duties include maintaining the Section's specialised material and some enquiry work for Members, particularly in the field of Parliament.

Preferred age range 25-35. Library qualifications required, together with experience of relevant information work.

Salary £4,048 p.a. rising to £6,193 p.a.

Non-negotiable conditions.

Apply for application form and details to: Establishment Section, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. Tel. 210 3603.

Closing date for return of application forms 28th July, 1978.

PIFCO
FILING
SUPERVISOR/LIBRARIAN

We are looking for an experienced person to take charge of our Central Filing System, and to create a Commercial Library. The position calls for someone with energy and ability to organize and administer the total filing system in a busy office environment. Ideally we are looking for someone with a commercial background and qualifications will be given to applicants with good professional qualifications and good working conditions.

Full-time salary and good working conditions.

Please write in confidence to Mr. J. A. S. Wallace, Pifco Limited, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 0JH.

ABERDEEN
ROBERT GORDON'S
INSTITUTE OF
TECHNOLOGYSCHOOL OF LIBRARIANSHIP
SENIOR LECTURER/
LECTURER

Graduate Librarian required in the Organizational and Administration subject area for BA(CNA) and Postgraduate Diploma (CNA) courses.

Salary in range—
Senior Lecturer £7,155-£9,042 per annum
Lecturer £4,056-£7,698 per annum.

Assistance with removal expenses.

Details from Chief Administrative Officer, Robert Gordon's Institute of Technology, School of Librarianship, Aberdeen, AB9 1FR (0224 574511).

Directorate of Community Services

LIBRARY
ASSISTANT
(TRAINEE)

We now have a vacancy for a trainee within the Directorate Services.

The successful applicant will undertake a training programme within the Directorate Library Service with a view to being considered under the normal scheme to gain professional qualification.

Applicants must have 5 G.C.E.s, one in English to grade and two at 'A' level.

Salary at 10 years £2,335 rising to £3,488.

Application forms from Personnel Services, Town Hall, Paisley Square, London, E2, or telephone 0777 (enquiries) quoting reference 9/32, closing date 31st July.

LONDON BOROUGH OF
TOWER HAMLETSMetropolitan Borough of
WIRRAL

SENIOR CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN

£3881-£4214 (Inclusiv of supplements)
(Does not include Phase 3 pay award agreed from 1 July, 1978)

Applications are invited from chartered librarians with previous experience of work with young people for a post based at Bebington Central Library. The Senior Children's Librarian is responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the provision of a high standard of service to the community. The post is a full-time position and will be expected to play an active role in the formation of departmental policies.

In addition the post carries responsibility for the organisation of young people's services at Bebington Central Children's Library.

Informal enquiries to Mrs. H. Davies (telephone 051-945 2080, ext. 142).

Application forms from and returnable to the Director of Library Services, 5 Riverside Road, West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside (telephone 051-625 9441, ext. 021, by 28 July).

Senior Assistant
Librarian-AP. 2/3

Successful applicants will in the first instance be part of the professional teams staffing our main Lending Libraries.

The minimum acceptable qualification is Part 1 of the Library Association Professional Examination. The non-chartered Librarian's starting salary is £3,775 p.a. inclusive with progression beyond £3,775 p.a. dependent on becoming Chartered Librarian. p.a. inclusive immediate on election to Registrar.

Application forms from Assistant Director (Personnel), London Borough of Hammersmith, Hammersmith House (BQC Building), Black's Road, London W6 6SG, quoting ref. RLCL 7. Closing date: 28th July 1978.



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BALDNESS

Hair problems solved... without the aid of hair transplants, wigs or hairpieces. If you are in need of help or my assistance with hair problems, write to—

B. GRAY, 43 COURT ROAD, SOUTHPORT
MERSEYSIDE, UK (enclosing SAE)

LIBRARIANS

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Applications are invited from chartered librarians with a postgraduate qualification in Librarianship or a postgraduate diploma in Librarianship for the post of

LIBRARIAN

The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library and for the provision of a high standard of service to the community. The post is a full-time position and will be expected to play an active role in the formation of departmental policies.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF

TOWER HAMLETS

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

LIBRARIAN (Full-time)

THE HEADLAND SCHOOL

Woolwich Road South

Woolwich, London SE18 6PP

Salary on scale £3,775 to £5,200

plus Stages 1 and 2

supplements

commencing at a point

consistent with experience

and qualifications

A salary award is pending

Applicants should send

further information to the

County Librarian, County

Office, Malpas 044 340,

and forms should be

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY

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